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HISTORY OF THE CORPORATION  
OF THE  
Reformed Dutch Church  
OF THE  
TOWN OF BROOKLYN,

(Known as the First Reformed Dutch Church.)





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# HISTORY

OF THE

## Corporation of the Reformed Dutch Church

OF THE

## TOWN OF BROOKLYN.

(Known as the First Reformed Dutch Church.)

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By A. J. BEEKMAN.

COMPILED FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS.

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PRESS OF BROOKLYN EAGLE.

1886.

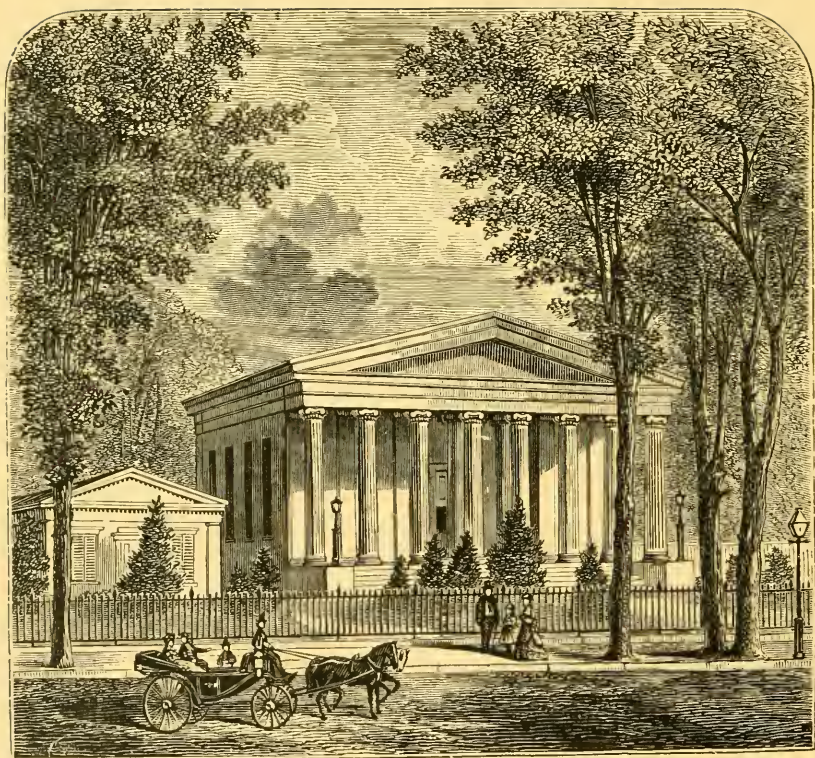
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FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH OF BROOKLYN, N. Y.

## PREFACE.

The compiler of this History removed from New York to Brooklyn in April, 1828, and immediately identified himself with this Church, and has been connected with it most of the time since. He has been a member of it longer than any male member for many years. He was Clerk of its Consistory for a long time, and also its Treasurer for years ; was associated with its old members, and obtained from General Johnson, personally, many facts, which he has incorporated in these pages. He has submitted this manuscript to the Hon. Benjamin D. Silliman (the oldest male attendant of the Church), who pronounces it correct.

He had access to all the minutes of the Consistory, and has noted, from time to time, all facts which he thought would be important in the History, and submits it to the members of the Church and congregation, and others, what he thinks will be the most complete history of the Church that has ever been published. He has availed himself of the translations of its history by the late Hon. Teunis G. Bergen, and had many intercourses with him in regard to the subject, and received from him much personal information of how he obtained the facts.



HISTORY  
OF THE  
FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH  
OF BROOKLYN.

That a grant of land for this Church was made by the Provincial Governor and Council as early as the grants to the churches at Midwout (Flatbush) and Amersfordt (Flatlands), there is no doubt, and that it was on the site of the first Church appears from the following :

In the original records at Albany, in the Dutch language, certain leaves are torn out, which were spoken of by Dr. C. D. Westbrook, the translator.

In the records of the Council in 1656, a grant was made of Morgens on the west side of the burial ground, and in 1657, of Morgens on the east side of the burial ground, and Gen. Jeremiah Johnson, in the paper prepared in 1834, to put in the corner-stone, which was recently taken up, said, "From tradition we learn that a place for Divine worship was prepared before the first Church was built, on the stone foundation of a Fort, which had been erected to protect the earlier settlers against Indians."

And in Domine Selyns' letter to the Classis of Amsterdam, dated October 4, 1660, he says : "We do not preach in a Church, but in a barn." And in the original records of the Church is the following

TRANSLATION :

Ancke Jans made application to the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church, of Brooklyn, for permission to enclose the grave of his deceased wife (Magdalen) with a fence, to prevent the swine from rooting up the grave. The application was referred to Rev. Henry Selyns and the Deacon Jacob Jorsin, with instructions to have the

burial ground fenced as soon as possible. Whereupon the Rev. Henry Selyns and Jacob Jorison contracted with Ancke Jans to enclose the burial ground with a good clapboard fence, five foot high, and to make a good board gate, and frontispiece for the entrance, for which they were to pay him seventy guilders.

Dated October 25, 1662.

(Signed)

ANCEKE JANS.

In 1654 the Rev. Johannes Theodorus Polhemus came from Itamarca in Brazil, where he had been laboring as a missionary. He was a descendant of an ancient and respectable family in the Netherlands, and commenced preaching in Brooklyn, Flatbush and Flatlands in that year—in the morning, in Flatbush, and alternating in Flatlands and Brooklyn in the afternoon. The people of Brooklyn were not satisfied with this arrangement, and in the Fall of 1658 a letter was sent to the Classis of Amsterdam, asking that a good Dutch clergyman might speedily be sent over to America.

On the 16th of February, 1660, the Rev. Henricus Selyns was examined by the Classis and admitted to the ministry, accepting at the same time a call from the Church of Brooklyn to serve them for four years. The approbation of the Directors of the West India Company was granted March 27th, 1660, and about this time, in company of Rev. Hermanus Blom, who was afterward settled at Esopus, now Kingston, he sailed for America. On their arrival here they presented to the Governor their letters, who issued a protocol on the 5th of September, 1660, and appointed two of his principal officers, Nicasius de Sille, a member of the Council, a man of no mean attainments and well founded in the law, and Martin Krigier, Burgomaster of New Amsterdam, to attend to the installation. He had preached for them the first time on the 30th of August, 1660, but met them for the first time as their pastor on the 7th of September, 1660. The following is a literal translation of the protocol, made by Doctor P. H. Vander Weyde, the organist of this Church :

PROTOCOL OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL OF BREUKELLEN.—*September 5, 1660*: The congregation of Breukelen having requested the Hon. Director-General and Council (for the reason of the difficulty of the road from Breukelen to Midwout (Flatbush), and the high age of the Reverent Dominie Johannes Polhemus, to whom it is a heavy task) to

have a preacher for themselves to the promotion of true religion and edification ; and as the request was reasonable, it was expected it would be granted as soon as the proper knowledge of the circumstances was given to the Hon. "*Autorities*" (authorities) ; and according to the request mentioned, having obtained the person of Henricus Selyns to promulgate the Gospel and serve the Sacraments—his honor the Director-General has, after different "*conferenties*" (conferences), and a proper contract with the Deputies of Breukelen, sent the said preacher in company of the Hon. Deputies, the Hon. Nicasius de Sille, Fiscal Council of New Netherlands, the Hon. Martin Krigier, Burgher of New Amsterdam in New Netherlands, to be presented to the congregation, and to be confirmed as their preacher with the following letter :

HONORABLE DEARLY BELOVED : This short and open letter serves only as an introduction to the bearer, the Rev. Do. Henricus Selyns, by the Government of Amsterdam at your request, he having accepted the calling of Preacher and all other duties depending thereon in the Village of Breukelen. We recommend you to receive him affectionately, and keep in respect, honor, and love ; to attend with diligence the services he will conduct ; to procure him according to your promise decent and comfortable lodgings, so as to honor God in His service, and prepare you more and more for eternal happiness, for which God alone will grant His blessing. I close in recommending you one and all in God's care and protection, and remain

Your well-wishing friend and Governor,

(Signed),

P. STUYVESANT.

[Given in Fort Amsterdam in New Netherlands, Anno 1660, Sept. 3]

After the letter was read by the mentioned Fiscal Council to the Consistory and Schepens of Breukelen, the Consistory and Schepens thanked the Governor and his Deputies, and accepted the said Henricus Selyns for their legal pastor, who then went with said deputies to give his inaugural sermon, declaring his affection towards the congregation newly intrusted to his care. (See page 140, vol. I., "*Stiles's History of Brooklyn.*")

On the 12th of September, 1660, he received from Dominic Polhemus a list of members, consisting of one elder, two deacons, and twenty-four members, thirty-one householders, and one hundred and thirty-four persons. Under the ministry of Do. Selyns the church increased so that in 1661 there were fifty-two communicants. In 1664 his time having expired, he at the urgent solicitation of his



aged father was most tenderly and affectionately dismissed from his charge, and on the 23d of July sailed for Holland in the ship *Beaver*, the same which brought him to America.

After his departure Charles Debevoise, the schoolmaster of the town, who was the church sexton, was authorized to read prayers and a sermon from some approved author each Sabbath in the Church, for the improvement of the congregation, until another minister could be found. The *Revs. Megapolensis* and *Drisius* of New York, and *Polhemus* of Flatbush, administered the ordinances and occasionally preached until May, 1670, when the Rev. Mr. Polhemus was so far restored to health that he preached again in Brooklyn in connection with his own congregations until his death, which occurred June 9th, 1676.

The first Church was built on the road what is now Fulton street, between Lawrence and Bridge streets. It stood in the middle of the road, unprotected on either side, with burial ground on the west. It stood for 100 years, and was built on the walls of a stone fort which had been erected to protect the first European settlers from the Indians. There has been no plan or picture of this Church preserved.

The second Church was built on the same spot, a plan of which has been preserved, and is shown in "Stiles's History of Brooklyn," Vol. I., page 192.

It was described as a large square edifice, with solid and very thick walls, plastered and whitewashed on every side up to the eaves; the roof, as usual in those days, ascending to the peak in the centre, capped with an open belfry, in which hung a sharp toned bell brought from Holland, which bell as late as 1840 was hanging in District School in Middagh street.

The Church is described as follows: "Its interior was plain, dark and very gloomy, so that in Summer one could not see to read in it after four o'clock in the afternoon, by reason of its small windows. These were six or eight feet from the floor, and filled with stained glass lights brought from Holland, representing vines, loaded with flowers. This Church, like the first, stood in the middle of the road leading from the ferry into the country.

On the 28th June, 1805, the corporation of this Church purchased from John Jackson the property on which the recent Church stood,



the deed for which is recorded in Liber 9, pages 301 and 302 of Kings County Records.

In 1807 the third Church was built on this property, which is now Joralemon street, in the rear of the City Hall. It was described as being built of blue stone, of heavy walls, plastered and painted a dark lead color, a tower on the eastern front, standing near to the road or street, with two aisles, gallery on three sides, and but limited accommodation. The corner-stone was laid May 15, 1807, by the Rev. Peter Lowe, and the building was so far completed that it was dedicated on the 23d December, 1807, by the Rev. J. H. Livingston, preaching from the text Heb., 4 chap., 12 verse. The building cost \$13,-745.53. The congregation came mostly from the country, in their long green wagons, and of course could only be expected to attend the morning service. The following list of persons has been found, and are supposed to be part of those families that attended the Church about 1810 to 1820:

From Bedford—Abraham De Bevoise, Lambert Suydam, Leffert Lefferts and others; from the Wallabout—Jeremiah Johnson, Abraham A. and Jeremiah Remsen, Martin and Jacob Schenck, Martin and Jacob Ryerson and others; from Cripplebush—Folkert Raplye, Francis Skillman, Michael Vandervoort and others; from Gowanus—John C. Freeke, Nehemiah Denton, Thomas Tiebout, Theodorous Polhemus, Adolphus Brower, Adrian and Jacques Cortleyou, Cornelius Van Brunt, Peter Wyckoff, Walter Berry, Michael, Peter, Simon and Garret Bergen, the Bennets, Van Pelts and others: from Red Hook—Rynier Suydam, Jacob Bergen, the Van Dykes and others; from Brooklyn—Teunis Joralemon, Samuel Smith, Adrian Hegeman, John Moon, Abraham Vanderveer and others.

To accommodate the inhabitants of the village, a chapel was put up on Middagh street in which the evening services were held, a notice of which was published in the *Long Island Star*, November 13, 1811, which said: "An elegant but small new house for the congregation of the Reformed Dutch Church of Brooklyn was opened Sabbath evening last by the Rev. S. S. Woodhull, who preached from the text, Matthew, chap. 23, verse 20." This building was sold some years after, and was occupied by Public School No. 6. During the pastorate of

Rev. S. S. Woodhull lots were bought on the corner of Nassau and Washington streets, and a parsonage built, which was occupied by him until his removal to New Brunswick, N. J.

In the minutes of Consistory, June 3, 1833, it was : *Resolved*, That a Committee be appointed to take into consideration the present situation of our Church and congregation, and advise with the people who belong to us and who desire to be connected with us, and that the Committee report what measures ought to be taken to provide accommodations for all persons and families, who desire to be connected with us.

The Committee recommended that a subscription list be circulated for the erection of a new Church. A Committee circulated subscriptions, and enough was subscribed to warrant the commencement of building the fourth Church. A Building Committee was then appointed, and the corner stone was laid on the 22d of May, 1834. It was laid by Abraham A. Remsen, the Senior Elder, and addresses were made by the Rev. Maurice W. Dwight, the pastor, and by the Rev. Thomas DeWitt, D.D., of the Collegiate Church of New York. John Skillman, Adrian Hegeman, Cornelius Van Cleef and Peter Wyckoff were Elders; Teunis Johnson, Adriance Van Brunt, Abraham Suydam and Henry Reed were Deacons. The Building Committee were Jeremiah Johnson, Leffert Lefferts, Samnel Smith, John S. Bergen, John Skillman, Garret Bergen, Theodorus Polhemus and John Schenck. Lefever & Gallager, architects; Tompkins & McFarlan, masons; Young, Reeve & Dimon, carpenters.

The papers and books placed in the corner stone were :

A History of the Church from its formation, prepared by Jeremiah Johnson, Clerk of the Consistory and Chairman of the Building Committee.

The Minutes of the last General and Particular Synods of the Reformed Dutch Church.

The last Annual Report of the Sunday-schools of Kings County.

A Temperance Almanac.

A copy of the "Reformed Dutch Church Magazine."

Two Sermons preached in Kentucky.

The present Constitution of the Reformed Dutch Church.

A Tract.

Woods' History of Long Island.

Furman's Notes of Brooklyn.

Copy of a Lecture delivered at the Lyceum.

The Charter of the City of Brooklyn, with the reports and petitions against the same.

A copy of the "Long Island Star" and "Brooklyn Advocate," and of the "Christian Intelligencer."

A Pardon by Gen. Howe in 1777 to an American Officer.

A Magdalen Report.

(Signed)

JEREMIAH JOHNSON,  
*Chairman.*

The Church was so far finished, that it was dedicated on the 7th of May, 1835, the members of the Classis of Long Island all being present. In 1853 General Johnson, who had been the Clerk of the Consistory for fifty years, tendered his resignation.

The first Sabbath-schools in Brooklyn were established about 1815. A public meeting was called for March 27, 1816, to be held in Mr. Evan Beynon's school room, at "which Christians of every denomination in Brooklyn, all who are advocates for decency and order, and all who are friends to the promulgation of the fundamental truths of our common religion," are invited to attend. The "Brooklyn Sunday-school Union Society" was organized on the 8th of April, and Abraham Remsen of this Church was appointed one of the vice-presidents, and David Anderson, also of this Church, one of the managers. Abraham Vanderveer was one of the first teachers in this Union school.

In 1819, Nehemiah Denton, Esq., established a Sunday-school for colored people in the kitchen of his dwelling, which continued for several years, but was afterward removed to a small school room, which stood on the corner of Gowanus lane and the Post road. Soon after, schools were started in the school house at lower Gowanus, at Bedford, and at the Wallabout. In June, 1828, a meeting was called to take into consideration the establishing of a Sunday-school in the lecture room, which was then building on the northwest corner of the church lot, to which meeting John C. Freeke, Esq., was called to the chair, and Abraham J. Beekman was made Secretary. It was then resolved that it was expedient to organize a Sunday-school, as soon as possible and an adjourned meeting was held soon after, at which Adrian Hegeman was elected Superintendent; Samuel Smith and Martinus Schoonmaker, Assistants, and Mrs. Mary Van Brunt and Miss Harriet Silliman, Female Superintendents; Thomas Hegeman, Secretary; the Misses Olcott, the

Misses Moon, the Misses Silliman, and others, female teachers; John D. and Archibald T. Lawrence, James Duffield, A. J. Beekman, John D. Prince, and others, male teachers. Adrian Hegeman remained Superintendent until 1839, when he left to unite with the Second or Central Reformed Dutch Church. The Consistory selected A. J. Beekman to succeed him, and the Superintendents have since been John L. Vandewater, Samuel Sloan, James McMillan, S. G. Wheeler, Robert Thorne, H. D. Van Orden, Merwin Rushmore, W. H. Dike, Frederick B. Schenck and others. The school was continued in this lecture room until it was taken down, when it was removed to the new lecture room on the east side of the Church, and has been continued in these rooms and in the Polytechnic Institute until the present.

A mission school was founded on Atlantic street in 1848, and also in Smith, corner Butler street, and in 1869 in Jones' building, opposite the Court House, with George G. Brinkerhoff as Superintendent, Adam R. Gray, Rob Yellowlee, and others, assisting him. In 1871 the Centennial Chapel on Wyckoff street, near Third avenue, was built, to which the school was removed, where preaching services were also held Sabbath evenings by the Rev. J. G. Bass, the City Missionary, afterward by Rev. A. N. Wyckoff, Rev. J. H. Callen, D.D., and where there is now a large and flourishing Sabbath-school conducted by Mr. Shelley, Superintendent, and a large number of teachers.

The Church has now in use two silver cups, which was given by Maria Baddia on the 3d of October, 1684, which has engraved on them :

Anno 1684, den 3 October  
heeft Maria Baddia aen de Kerke  
Van Bruekelen Lervert een  
Zilvert beecker om het  
Aboutmael mjt Te Delen.

This Maria Baddia, sometimes called Mary Thomas, was married first to Jacob Vanden or Verden; second to William Adrianse Bennett, and third to Paulus Vanderbeck. She was admitted as a member of this Church September 27, 1662, as Marritie Baddia, nee Bennett, nee Thomas, wife of Paulus Vanderbeck.

## HISTORY OF THE PASTORS.

We have given in the former part of this history the account of Rev. Johannes Theodorus Polhemus and of the Rev. Henry Selyns, who were pastors from 1654 to 1676.

In 1676, Rev. William Nieawenhuysen was invited to supply this pulpit, which he did for one year.

In 1677, the Collegiate Church of Kings County extended a call to the Rev. Casparus Van Zuren, from Holland, and who was installed on the 6th of September, at Flatbush, and supplied them until 1685, when he returned to Holland.

Rev. Randolphus Van Varick was the next pastor, from 1685 to 1694. During the Licslerian troubles in 1689, Mr. Varick, with other ministers, stood out against the authority of Licsler, and were treated with much harshness, being dragged from their homes, cast into jail, deposed from the ministry and fined heavily. These severities undoubtedly hastened his death. He was succeeded by Rev. William Lupardus, whose ministry was terminated by death in 1701 or 2.

Rev. Vincentius Antonides was installed in the Church at Flatbush January 1, 1705.

Rev. Bernardus Freeman, of Schenectady, was also called in 1705, and installed in the Church at New Utrecht.

Mr. Freeman died in 1741, and Mr. Antonides died in 1744. Mr. Freeman's successor in 1742 was Rev. Johannes Arondeus from Rotterdam, who seemed to have possessed a contumacious spirit and to have led an irregular life. He quarreled with his colleague, Mr. Van Sinderen, very soon after his arrival, and in May, 1747, went off secretly, and was deposed from the ministry in 1752.

In 1746, Rev. Ulpianes Van Sinderen, a native of Holland, was called. He, by request of his Consistory, resigned in 1784, and died in 1796, receiving his salary from the several churches until his death in 1796.

Rev. Antoneus Curtenius was called as colleague to Mr. Van Sinderen May 2, 1755, and died October, 1756.

In 1757, Rev. Johannes Casparus Rubell, of Hesse Castell in Germany, was called over the churches of Kings County. He was a decided Loyalist, while Mr. Van Sinderen was a Whig, so that the two pastors were in decided opposition to each other. He was deposed from the ministry in 1784.

Rev. Martinus Schoonmaker was licensed to preach in 1763, and was called to the churches of Harlaem and Gravesend. In 1781 he accepted a call to the churches of Gravesend, Success and Wolver Hollow. During the war he preached for the Collegiate Churches of Kings County part of the time, but becoming suspected as a spy by it being known that he was carrying letters from Harlem where he lived, and where the American army were encamped, over to Long Island to their families. They resolved to surround the house where he was staying, but the Consistory also found it out, and held a meeting after the service, and warned him in time, so that he escaped by way of the Narrows to reach his own home at Harlem. After the British took Harlem, his house and all his effects were destroyed by them ; he escaped to Ulster County.

After the closing of the war, in 1784 he was called to the six churches of Kings County, where he continued until his death, which occurred on the 20th of May, 1824, aged 87 years, having been in the ministry 61 years. His successor says of him : " His labors were arduous, yet he was never known to faint in the Master's cause, and few men have gone to the grave with a character more unblemished."

Rev. Peter Lowe was called as colleague to Mr. Schoonmaker, October 28, 1787, to preach in the English language, in which he continued for twenty-one years, until the collegiate connection was dissolved, when he accepted the call from the churches of Flatbush and Flatlands, where he continued until his death, which occurred on June, 1818.

On the 24th October, 1802, the Rev. John B. Johnson, of Albany, was installed as pastor of the Church in Brooklyn. While in Albany he was invited by both houses of the Legislature to preach the funeral sermon on the death of Gen. Washington, which he did on the 22d of February, 1800. His health, somewhat impaired before he left Albany,



began to fail rapidly, and the loss of his wife in March, 1803, undoubtedly hastened his own death, which occurred in August, 1803.

He was succeeded in 1806 by the Rev. Selah Strong Woodhull, born in New York August 4, 1786, graduated at Yale College in 1802, was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1805, was settled first at Bound Brook, N. J., and was called to this Church in 1806. During his pastorate here this Church secured its incorporation on the 18th of December, 1814; during this year he held the appointment of Chaplain in the army of the United States, in connection with the war with Great Britain. In 1820, he was appointed Secretary of the American Bible Society, when he became widely known, and held the office until he gave up his pastoral charge. In September, 1825, he was chosen by the General Synod to the Professorship of Ecclesiastical History and Pastoral Theology of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, and at the same time was appointed by the Trustees of Rutgers College to a Professorship of Metaphysics and the Philosophy of the Human Mind. He was an indefatigable student, and at his death he had fifty-two sermons written that he had never preached. After great suffering he died February 27, 1826, in the fiftieth year of his age.

Rev. Ebenezer Mason, son of the Rev. John M. Mason, of New York, was called to succeed Dr. Woodhull, and was installed in June, 1826. In consequence of some disagreement with his Consistory in regard to baptism he resigned his charge in April, 1828.

Rev. Peter P. Rouse succeeded Mr. Mason. He was born in Catskill, N. Y., 29th March, 1799; studied at Union College where he graduated in 1818, and from the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick in 1821. He was first settled at Florida, Montgomery County, N. Y., where he remained until the Fall of 1828, when he was called to this Church and was installed October 13 of that year. His religious character was of a high order, which made him very successful in the ministry, and he had large accessions to his Church.

He was an excellent pastor; he would, when sick, leave his bed, if able, to go and minister to any one who he heard was sick. In 1834, while praying at the bedside of a sick parishioner, he was seized with a copious hemorrhage of the lungs, and died in June of that year, at

New Brunswick, N. J. His remains were brought to Brooklyn. The General Synod were in session in New York City at that time. They appointed a committee to attend his funeral.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Maurice W. Dwight, grandson of President Edwards, of Northampton, Mass.; born May 4, 1796; graduated at Columbia College in 1816, and studied theology at the New Brunswick Seminary, and was licensed to preach in 1821; settled first at Waterford, N. Y., afterward at New Hackensack, Dutchess County, and was called and installed as pastor of this Church May 26, 1833. He was a thorough student, and never entered the pulpit without a sermon complete in every respect. He continued here a long time, but resigned May 1, 1855, and continued to reside in the congregation, and supplied the pulpit when necessary until his death, which occurred in 1859.

Rev. Acman P. Van Giesen was called and installed November 1, 1855. His health was not good, and he was permitted to make a trip to the South, and resigned in November, 1859.

Rev. Alphonso A. Willets succeeded Mr. Van Giesen, and was installed June, 1860. He was a successful preacher, and drew large audiences, and resigned June 1, 1865.

Rev. Joseph Kimball followed Mr. Willets and was installed November 21, 1865. He was called from the Reformed Dutch Church of Fishkill Landing, on the Hudson. His characteristics as a preacher were earnestness and simplicity, with the good old methods of expounding the Gospel. In May, 1874, while preaching the fortieth anniversary of the laying of corner stone of this church, he was stricken in the pulpit with vertigo, and had to be taken to the parsonage. He was afterwards removed to Newburgh, his native place, where he died December 6, 1874. Rev. Henry R. Dickson was called from the Church of York, South Carolina, and installed October 28, 1875, and died March 8, 1877.

The present pastor, Rev. David N. Vanderveer, D. D., was installed September 15, 1878.



## CHURCHES FORMED FROM THE FIRST REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

In 1827 the Second, or Central Reformed Dutch Church (now the Church on the Heights) was formed. A large portion of the families came from this Church at its organization.

In 1838 the South Dutch Church was organized, taken entirely from this Church; at least thirty or forty families, substantial farmers, who came in their large wagons (always full), left to form that Church. Dr. Dwight said he felt as if his right arm had been taken off.

In 1842, when the South Church bought the Fourth Presbyterian, then a large number of families left to connect with is now the Twelfth Street Church.

In 1840 the Fourth Church was organized, which was afterward dissolved, but was bought by the Presbyterians, and is now the Franklin Avenue Presbyterian Church; quite a number of families from this Church united in its organization.

In 1846 the Middle Reformed Church, now Harrison Street, was organized, mostly from this Church.

In 1847 the Missionary Board appointed the Rev. Mr. Thompson to labor as Missionary in the vicinity of Clinton and Washington avenues. A division soon took place, when those who favored the Dutch Church commenced in a small building on Washington avenue, from which came the organization of the North Reformed Dutch Church, which was afterward the Church of which the Rev. A. Elmendorf was pastor. A large number of families left the First Church to form the new organization.

In 1853 the East Reformed Dutch Church was organized, which is now the Bedford Church; a number of families being those from Bedford was connected with it.

In 1853 the Lee Avenue Church. The corner-stone was laid by Hon. B. D. Silliman, and which was dedicated by Rev. Dr. Bethune ; its first members came from this Church.

In 1856 the Church at East Williamsburgh was formed ; a portion of its members came from this the first Church.

At least nine or ten churches have been taken from this Church, so that it can be truly said this (First Reformed Dutch Church) has been the Mother of Churches.







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